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EX BIBLIOTHECA

FRANCES A. YATES

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1902

LIFE OF MILTON.

JOHN MILTON was born at London, 9th December 1608. He was educated in private and at St Paul's School, and in 1625 entered Christ's College, Cambridge, where he remained seven years. Preferring a 'blameless silence' to the church, he spent the next five years in calm seclusion at Horton, and here he wrote his *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso*, *Arcades*, *Comus*, and *Lycidas*. After fifteen months of foreign travel came the Civil War, and Milton felt it his duty to return to his country. His weapon was the pen and not the sword, and ere long he was in the thick of the conflict with a succession of pamphlets. His defence of the regicide of Charles I. led to his appointment as secretary of foreign tongues to the Commonwealth, and his great replies to Salmasius spread his name if not his good fame over Europe. In 1653 he became totally blind, and the Restoration in 1660 closed his public career, but gave him time for works which the world 'will not willingly let die.' Blind and poor, but with spirit unbroken, he pursued his lofty contemplations, and his verse is marked by its severe grandeur, its calmness and serenity. His *Paradise Lost* appeared in 1667, *Paradise Regained* and *Samson Agonistes* in 1671; and on the 8th November 1674, Milton died.

Milton's two idylls, *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso*, form a pair of poetic pendants to each other. They breathe the free air of Spring and Summer and of the fields round Horton. They are thoroughly naturalistic, and are the choicest expression our language has yet found of the fresh and abiding charm of country life, as it offers itself to the eyes of the youthful student, issuing at early dawn, or at sunset, into the fields, from his chamber and his books. These two poems are a landmark in the metrical art of English poetry. The delicacy and play of the fancy and the easy grace of the movement equal them with the best Elizabethan examples, but form a strong contrast to the austerity of Milton's later manner.

In *Lycidas* we find traces of Milton's earlier style along with his later; he is still the sweet singer of the *Comus* and of *L'Allegro*, but his graver and maturer notes give the promise of the *Paradise Lost*. Not less important than the literary is the historical and biographical interest of the poem, as it shows the dark and threatening clouds already forming on the political horizon, and the growth of the poet's own opinions. As a passionate tribute to the dead it still stands unequalled, though among its successors have been poems as great as the *Adonais* of Shelley, and the *In Memoriam* of Tennyson.

L' ALLEGRO.

HENCE, loathed Melancholy,
Of Cerberus and blackest Midnight born
In Stygian cave forlorn,
'Mongst horrid shapes, and shrieks, and sights unholy!
Find out some uncouth cell, 5
Where brooding Darkness spreads his jealous wings,
And the night-raven sings;
There, under ebon shades, and low-browed rocks,
As ragged as thy locks,

ABBREVIATIONS.—A.S. = Anglo-Saxon; M.E. = Middle English; Lat. = Latin; Gr. = Greek; Fr. = French; O. Fr. = Old French; Ger. = German; Cf. = compare; Cog. = cognate; pa.p. = past participle; pl. = plural.

1. **Melancholy** = sadness, supposed to be due to an excess of 'black bile.' Derived through O. Fr. and Lat., from Gr. *melancholia*, made up of *melan-*, stem of *melas*, black, and *cholē*, bile.

2. **Cerberus**, the three-headed dog which guarded the entrance to the infernal regions. This parentage of Melancholy is Milton's own invention.

3. **Stygian** = hateful. The Styx was one of the four rivers of the infernal regions. It flowed round Hades seven times; over it Charon ferried the ghosts of the dead; and by its waters the gods were wont to swear. Cf. *Paradise Lost*, ii., lines 577-581:

'Abhorred Styx, the flood of deadly hate;

Sad Acheron of sorrow, black and deep;
Cocytus, named of lamentation loud

Heard on the rueful stream; fierce
Phlegeton,

Whose waves of torrent fire inflame
with rage.'

—**Forlorn** = gloomy. Its original meaning was 'lost' or 'abandoned,'

A.S. *forloren* being pa.p. of *forlebsan*, from prefix *for-* and *lebsan*, to lose. In the same manner are formed Ger. *verloren* and Danish *forloren*.

5. **Uncouth** = unknown; hence 'strange,' 'odd,' its modern meaning. A.S. *uncūdh*, unknown, from *un*, not, and *cūdh*, pa.p. of *cunnan*, to know.

6. **Brooding**, overshadowing as a hen covers her eggs with her wings.

8. **Ebon** = black, for 'ebony.' Earlier form *ebene*, derived, through O. Fr. and Lat., from Gr. *ebenos*, *ebenē*, which was borrowed from Hebrew *hobnīm*, pl. ebony wood, from its hardness—*eben*, a stone.—**Low-browed** = beetle-browed, overhanging.

9. **Ragged**, used as synonymous with 'rugged.' Cf. Isaiah, ii. 21: 'The tops of the ragged rocks.' *Ragged* is from an A.S. *raggie*, rough, shaggy, with cog. forms in Swedish and Icelandic; *rugged* is formed from *rough*, A.S. *rūh*, rough, hairy; cog. with Ger. *rauh*. This is the only case in which 'ragged' occurs in Milton's works: 'rugged' occurs six times.

In dark Cimmerian desert ever dwell.
 But come, thou Goddess fair and free,
 In Heaven yclept Euphrosyne,
 And by men, heart-easing Mirth;
 Whom lovely Venus, at a birth,
 With two sister Graces more,
 To ivy-crownèd Bacchus bore :

10

15

✓ 10. **Cimmerian.** The Cimmerians are described in the *Odyssey* as a people dwelling 'beyond the ocean-stream,' in a land of perpetual darkness. Hence 'Cimmerian darkness.'

11. **Fair and free**, a common conjunction of epithets for a lady in the old metrical romances; 'free' = frank.

11-24. **Euphrosyne** (the kindly and mirthful), one of the three Graces in Greek mythology. The 'two sister Graces more' were Aglaia (the bright) and Thalia (the blooming). The Graces are represented as the daughters of Zeus (Jupiter) by Hera (Juno), or by one of several other goddesses, among whom Aphrodite (Venus) is not mentioned. But Milton's mythology is here symbolical. He gives a choice of two pedigrees for Euphrosyne. Either she is the daughter of Bacchus and Venus, born at one birth with the other Graces, Aglaia and Thalia—that is, cheerfulness may spring from wine and love; or preferably, and by an airier and purer origin, she is the child of Aurora (the dawn), begotten in early summer by Zephyr (the west wind)—that is, it is the early freshness of the summer morning that best produces cheerfulness. Euphrosyne presides over festivities. Spenser makes her and her 'sister Graces' daughters of Jove and Eurynome (the daughter of Ocean); see his *Faerie Queene*, VI. x. 22 :

'The first of them hight mylde Euphrosyne,
 Next fair Aglaia, last Thalia merry.'

✓ 12. **Yclept** = called; spelled also 'ycleped,' pa.p. of M.E. *clepen*, to call, from A.S. *clypian*, *geclypian*, pa.p.

clypod, *geclypod*. This verbal prefix *y-* is nearly obsolete, being only retained in the archaic forms *y-clept*, *y-wis*. Its M.E. forms are *y-*, *i-*, the A.S. *ge-*, common both with nouns and verbs. It appears as *e-* in the word *enough*, and as *a-* in *aware*, and is cognate with the German and Dutch *ge-*, Gothic *ga-*. The word 'yclept' occurs nowhere else in Milton's poetry, and indeed he uses this old verbal prefix only in two other instances—in the word 'ychained' (*Ode to Nativity*, 155), and in 'star-ypointing' (*On Shakespeare*, 4).

14. **Venus**, in Latin mythology, the goddess of love and beauty, identified with the Greek Aphrodite, herself merely a modification of the Phœnician Ashtaroth or Astarte. Aphrodite was the daughter of Zeus and Dione, though many writers assert that she rose from the foam of the sea (Gr. *aphros*, sea-foam). She was the wife of Hephaistos (Vulcan), and the mother of Eros (Cupid), by whom, as well as by the Graces, she is accompanied.

16. **Bacchus**, the Greek Dionysus, the god of wine, son of Zeus (Jupiter) and Semele, the daughter of Cadmus. He traversed all Asia as far as India, teaching its inhabitants the cultivation of the vine, and after having established his divine nature throughout the world, rose into Olympus. He is represented as surrounded by Bacchantic women, raging with madness or enthusiasm, carrying in their hands thyrsus-staffs, entwined with ivy. Besides the ivy, the vine and laurel are sacred to him; and among animals, the dolphin, tiger, panther, and ass.

Or whether (as some sager sing),
 The frolic wind, that breathes the spring,
 Zephyr, with Aurora playing,
 As he met her once a-Maying ; 20
 There, on beds of violets blue,
 And fresh-blown roses washed in dew,
 Filled her with thee a daughter fair,
 So buxom, blithe, and debonair.
 Haste thee, Nymph, and bring with thee 25
 Jest, and youthful Jollity,
 Quips, and Cranks, and wanton Wiles,
 Nods, and Becks, and wreathed Smiles,

18. Frolic = frolicsome.

19. Zephyr, the personification of the west wind. He is frequently mentioned by Homer, and he inhabited, together with Boreas (the north wind) a palace in Thrace.—Aurora, Greek Eos, the goddess of the dawn. At the close of every night she rises from the couch of her spouse Tithonus, and ascends up to heaven in a chariot drawn by swift horses, to announce the coming light of the sun.

20. A-Maying. The *a* is a corruption of *on*, as in *alive*, *aloft*, *away*, *aground*, &c. Our forefathers hailed the advent of the first of May with the greatest joy. Early in the morning they went out into the fields to gather flowers and hawthorn branches. The hawthorn bloom was distinctively 'the May,' and this expedition to the fields and woods was spoken of as 'going a-Maying.'

22. Cf. Shakspeare's 'morning roses newly washed in dew' (*Taming of the Shrew*, ii. 1).

24. Buxom = gay or lively. Its modern meaning is 'handsome,' 'jolly ;' but the original signification was pliant, yielding, good-humoured. M.E. *boxom*, *buhsum*, from A.S. *blūgan*, to bow, bend, obey, and *-sum*, suffix, as in *win-some*. Milton only uses the word in one other instance, 'wing silently the buxom air' (*Paradise Lost*, ii. 842).—Blithe, merry or gay. A.S. *blīdh*, *blīdhe*, sweet, happy.—

Debonair = gracious, courteous. From Fr. *de bon aire*, 'of a good mien,' 'well-mannered.' The origin of *aire* is doubtful ; it occurs in our phrase 'to give one's self *airs*.' Cf. Shakspeare's 'So buxom, blithe, and full of face' (*Pericles*, i. 1).

26. Jest, originally 'a story.' M.E. *geste*, through O. Fr., from Lat. *gesta*, put for *res gesta*, a thing done, an exploit.—Jollity = merriment. Formed from 'jolly,' the M.E. forms of which are *iolif*, *ioly*, through O. Fr. *jolif*, *joli*, jolly, gay, trim, but originally 'festive,' from Icelandic *jól*, a great feast in the heathen time ; cog. with A.S. *geōla*, our Yule.

27. Quips, sharp, sarcastic sayings. Quip is from the Welsh *chwip*, a quick turn. An example of the quip is that in Shakspeare's *Merry Wives of Windsor*, i. 3 :

'Falstaff. My honest lads, I will tell you what I am about.

Pistol. Two yards, and more.

Falstaff. No quips now, Pistol !'

—Cranks, odd turns of speech, such as puns and the like.—Wiles, tricks ; A.S. *wīl*, *wīle*, a wile.

28. Becks, signs either with the finger or the head, including also 'nods.' A contraction of beckon, A.S. *bēcnan*, *beācnian*, from *bēcn*, *beācen*, a sign.—Wreathed smiles, because they curl or twist the features.

Such as hang on Hebe's cheek,
 And love to live in dimple sleek ; 30
 Sport that wrinkled Care derides,
 And Laughter holding both his sides.
 Come, and trip it, as you go,
 On the light fantastic toe ;
 And in thy right hand lead with thee 35
 The mountain-nymph, sweet Liberty ;
 And, if I give thee honour due,
 Mirth, admit me of thy crew,
 To live with her, and live with thee,
 In unprovèd pleasures free ; 40
 To hear the lark begin his flight,
 And, singing, startle the dull night,
 From his watch-tower in the skies,
 Till the dappled dawn doth rise ;
 Then to come, in spite of sorrow, 45
 And at my window bid good-morrow,

29. **Hebe**, the goddess of youth, a daughter of Zeus (Jupiter) and Hēra (Juno). She was cup-bearer to the gods before Ganymedes obtained this office, and she became the wife of Hercules after his deification.

30. **Dimple**, a small hollow or natural depression, as in the cheeks. Connected with *dip*.—**Sleek**, smooth, glossy. Scandinavian ; as Icelandic *slíkr*, sleek.

33-34. Cf. Milton's *Comus*, 143-4 :

'Come, knit hands, and beat the ground,
 In a light fantastic round.'

—**Fantastic**, capricious.

36. **Mountain-nymph**. Not necessarily because mountaineers are lovers of liberty, but rather Milton's imagination, warmed with classical culture, raised before him 'the fleet Oreads sporting visibly' in sunny Grecian hills.

38. **Crew** = company. The word has now a bad sense except in the case of a ship's crew.

40. **Unprovèd**, in the sense of 'unprovable' or 'innocent.' Cf.

'unvalued' for 'invaluable' (*On Shakspeare*, 11), and 'unexpressive' for 'not expressed' (*Lycidas*, 176).

44. **Dappled** = marked with spots. *Dapple* is a doublet of *dimple*, a diminutive of *dip*. Cf. Shakspeare, *Much Ado about Nothing*, v. 3 :

'The gentle day

Dapples the drowsy east with spots of grey.'

45. **To come**, following in sense after 'admit me' (line 38), like the previous 'to live' (line 39), 'to hear' (line 41), in the list of 'unprovèd pleasures.' Others read 'to come' as agreeing with 'begin' (line 41) and 'startle' (line 42), thus making it the lark that comes to L'Allegro's window to bid him good-morrow—a construction which assumes an ignorance on the poet's part of the habits of the lark. The speaker asks Mirth to admit him to her company and that of the nymph Liberty, and to let him enjoy the pleasures natural to such companionship (lines 38-40). He then goes on to give examples of these pleasures.

Through the sweet-briar or the vine,
 Or the twisted eglantine ;
 While the cock, with lively din,
 Scatters the rear of darkness thin ; 50
 And to the stack, or the barn-door,
 Stoutly struts his dames before :
 Oft listening how the hounds and horn
 Cheerly rouse the slumbering morn,
 From the side of some hoar hill, 55
 Through the high wood echoing shrill :
 Some time walking, not unseen,
 By hedgerow elms, on hillocks green,
 Right against the eastern gate,
 Where the great Sun begins his state, 60
 Robed in flames, and amber light,
 The clouds in thousand liveries dight ;

The first (lines 41-44) is that of the sensations of early morning, when he hears the song of the mounting skylark, and after listening to it, arises either to give or to receive a blithe good-morrow at his window through the flowers which cluster all around it. Other morning sounds are also heard, and he goes forth to enjoy the cheerful music of the chase (lines 53-56), or to the sight of the rising sun (lines 57-62).

48. *Twisted eglantine*. As the 'sweet brier' and 'eglantine' are names for the same plant, some critics suppose the 'twisted eglantine' to mean the honeysuckle; others, with more likelihood, the dog-rose. Fr. *églantine*; O. Fr. *aiglantine*, *aiglantier*, sweet-brier, through Low Lat. forms, from Lat. *aculeus*, a prickle, diminutive of *acus*, a needle.

50. *Rear*, the hinder or latter part.

51. *Stack*, a large pile of anything, as hay, wood, &c. Literally 'what is set up;' cog. with 'stake.'

55. *Hoar*, gray with age; M.E. *hoor*; A.S. *hâr*.

57. *Not unseen*. As Hurd remarks, happy men love witnesses of their joy.

59. *Eastern gate*. Cf. Shakspeare, *Midsummer Night's Dream*, iii. 2 :

'Even till the eastern gate, all fiery red,
 Opening on Neptune with fair blessed beams,
 Turns into yellow gold his salt green streams.'

60. *State*, stately progress.

61. *Amber*=amber-coloured. Amber is a yellowish-coloured fossil resin used for ornaments, found in many parts of the world, very abundantly on the Prussian coasts of the Baltic Sea. The word is derived, through the Fr. and Spanish, from Arabic *anbar* (pronounced *ambar*), ambergris, a rich perfume. The resinous amber was so called from its resemblance to ambergris, which is a fragrant substance of a gray colour, found on the sea-coast of warm countries, and in the intestines of the spermaceti whale.

62. *Liveries*. This word originally meant any distinctive dress worn by the household of a nobleman, so called because *delivered* or given out at regular periods; hence any characteristic dress or appearance, as here. Cf. *Paradise Lost*, vii. 478: 'In all the

While the plowman, near at hand,
Whistles o'er the furrowed land,
And the milkmaid singeth blithe, 65
And the mower whets his scythe,
And every shepherd tells his tale
Under the hawthorn in the dale.

Straight mine eye hath caught new pleasures,
Whilst the landskip round it measures; 70
Russet lawns, and fallows grey,
Where the nibbling flocks do stray;
Mountains on whose barren breast
The labouring clouds do often rest;
Meadows trim with daisies pied; 75
Shallow brooks, and rivers wide;

liveries decked of summer's pride;' and Shakspeare, *Merchant of Venice*, ii. 1: 'The shadowed livery of the burnished sun.'—**Dight**, arrayed, from A.S. *dihtan*, to arrange.

66. **Mower**, from A.S. *māwan*, to mow, from which also comes *meadow*.—**Scythe**, A.S. *sidhe*.

67. **Tells his tale** = counts his sheep, lest any may be missing. A.S. *tellan*, to number; *talū*, a number. Cf. Ger. *zählen*. Cf. Exodus, v. 8: 'The tale of the bricks.'

69. **Straight** = at once. By this rapid turn of phrase, the poet skillfully indicates a new paragraph in his description. Hitherto he was enumerating the phenomena of early morning, now his eye catches 'new pleasures,' as the day advances.

70. **Landskip**, an earlier spelling of *landscape*, the aspect of the country, or a picture representing this. The word was first used by the Dutch painters; Dutch *landschap*, literally the *form* or fashion of the *land*, from *land*, land, and *-schap*, a suffix corresponding to the A.S. *-scipe*, and the modern English *-ship*, as in *friendship*.

71. **Russet**, reddish-brown. Through Fr., from Lat. *russus*, reddish.—**Lawn** has here its original sense of 'an open space between woods.' Its

modern meaning is 'a grass-covered space in front of a mansion.' M.E. *laund*, from O. Fr. *lande*, a wild, untilled plain; referred by Littré to Ger. *land*; by Diez to Breton *lann*, a bushy shrub, the plural of which, *lannon*, means waste-lands. Cf. Welsh *llan*, Gaelic *lann*, an inclosure, piece of land.—**Fallows gray**. Fallow is land that has been left for a year or so untilled after being ploughed. The name was given from the reddish colour of unploughed land, for 'fallow' means literally 'reddish' or pale yellow, as when we speak of 'fallow deer.' A.S. *fealu*, *fealo*, pale red, yellowish; allied to Ger. *fahl*, pale.

73-74. Though it is very probable that this poem was written by Milton at Horton, we must not look in it for a transcript of the scenery of any one place, even of the place where it was written. Nowhere in the flat vicinity of Horton, or round Oxford, can we find such mountains as these.—**Labouring** = big with rain.

75. **Pied** = variegated in colour. Cf. *magpie* and *piebald*. Through Fr., from Lat. *pica*, a magpie. Cf. Shakspeare's *Love's Labour's Lost*, V. ii.: '*Daisies pied* and violets blue.'

Towers and battlements it sees
 Bosomed high in tufted trees,
 Where perhaps some beauty lies,
 The cynosure of neighbouring eyes. 80
 Hard by a cottage chimney smokes
 From betwixt two aged oaks,
 Where Corydon and Thyrsis met
 Are at their savoury dinner set
 Of herbs and other country messes, 85
 Which the neat-handed Phillis dresses;
 And then in haste her bower she leaves,
 With Thestylis to bind the sheaves;
 Or, if the earlier season lead,
 To the tanned haycock in the mead. 90
 Sometimes, with secure delight,
 The upland hamlets will invite,

77-78. The reference here is perhaps to Windsor Castle, as seen from Horton.

79. *Lies* = resides. Cf. Shakspeare's *Merry Wives of Windsor*, ii. 2: 'When the court lay at Windsor,' and our modern expressions: 'To lie before a town,' 'to lie in jail.'

80. *Cynosure*, the Greek name for the constellation of the Little Bear, which contains the pole-star, and by which the Phœnician mariners steered their course, while the Greeks steered by the Great Bear. The name is metaphorically applied to a lady on whom all eyes are fastened for her beauty. Cf. *Comus*, 339-342:

'Visit us

With thy long levelled rule of streaming light;

And thou shalt be our star of Arcady,
 Or Tyrian Cynosure.'

In the Greek mythology, Callisto, daughter of Lycæon, king of Arcadia, was changed into the Greater Bear (called also Helice), and her son, Arcas, into the Lesser (called also Cynosūra).

83-88. *Coridon* and *Thyrsis* . . . *Phyllis* . . . *Thestylis*, stock names of

shepherds in the idylls of Theocritus and Virgil, here applied to English rustics. Their being at dinner indicates that it is now mid-day.

85. *Messes*, different kinds of food, so called because *sent* up or served up at table. The word appears in the nautical word *messmate*, one who eats at the same table with another; and *mess-room*, the room where the officers of a regiment dine. Through Fr. from Lat. *mitto*, *missum*, to send.

87. *Bower* = apartment. A.S. *būr*, a chamber, *būan*, to dwell. Cf. the Scotch *byre*, the place where cattle are kept.

90. *Haycock*, a conical pile of hay. This line may be connected immediately with 'lead,' in which case must be understood, 'she goes there,' or something of that sort: or better, it may be loosely connected with 'her bower she leaves,' which phrase conveys the notion of going.

91. *Secure*, in its strictly literal sense of 'free from care.' Lat. *securus*, from *se-* (for *sine*), apart from, and *cura*, care. Cf. Ben Jonson in his *Epode*:

'Men may securely sin, but safely never;'

When the merry bells ring round,
 And the jocund rebecks sound
 To many a youth and many a maid, 95
 Dancing in the chequered shade,
 And young and old come forth to play
 On a sunshine holyday,
 Till the livelong daylight fail :
 Then to the spicy nut-brown ale, 100
 With stories told of many a feat,
 How faery Mab the junkets eat.
 She was pinched and pulled, she said ;
 And he, by Friar's lantern led,

94. **Jocund**, cheerful, merry. Lat. *jucundus*, from *jocus*, a jest. — **Rebeck**, a kind of musical instrument having catgut strings, and played with a bow. Its strings were originally two in number, then three, and later four. O. Fr. *rebec*, from Italian *ribecca*, *ribebba*, from Persian *rubâb*. Shakspeare calls the fiddler in *Romeo and Juliet* IV. v. 'Hugh Rebeck.'

96. **Chequered**, marked in patches of dark and of light, as a chess-board is. Cf. Shakspeare's *Titus Andronicus*, ii. 3 :

'The green leaves quiver with the cooling wind,
 And make a *chequered shadow* on the ground.'

M.E. *chekker*, *chekere*, a chess-board, from O. Fr. *eschequier*, a chess-board ; also an exchequer, from O. Fr. *eschec*, check ! at chess. This word was borrowed from the Persian *shâh*, a king, king at chess ; whence *shâh-mât*, checkmate, literally 'the king is dead,' from *mât*, he is dead.

98. **Sunshine**, used as an adjective for 'sunshiny.' Cf. *Comus*, 959 : 'Till next sunshine holiday.'

99. **Livelong**, long lasting. The time is summer.

100. '**Then**,' as it grows dark. — **Spicy ale**. This 'delectable beverage' was flavoured with nutmeg and sugar, toast, roasted crabs or apples.

102. **Faery Mab** for Queen Mab.

See the fine passage in Shakspeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, i. 4, in which the queen is described. The origin of her name is uncertain, but many Elizabethan writers place her on the throne of Titania. — **Junkets**, any kind of rustic dainties, especially cream-cheese, so called because served up on rushes. Italian *guincata*, from Lat. *juncus*, a rush.

103, 104. **She . . . he**. The 'she' and 'he' are the rustic story-tellers around the 'nut-brown ale.' Pinching was a common punishment inflicted by the fairies. Cf. Shakspeare's *Comedy of Errors*, ii. 2 :

'We talk with goblins, owls, and sprites :
 If we obey them not, this will ensue—
 They'll suck our breath, or pinch us black and blue.'

104. **Friar's lantern led**, that is, lured by the flickering light which is called the *Ignis Fatuus*, and explained by physical causes, but which popular mythology ascribed to the malignant being, *Jack-o'-the-Lantern* or *Will-o'-the-Wisp*, who flits in luminous form over marshes to deceive travellers and lure them to their death. The Friar is 'Friar Rush'—a mistake, however, of the poet's, according to Mr Keightley, as the 'Friar Rush' of the popular fairy mythology is a domestic spirit 'who haunted houses, not fields, and was never the same with Jack-o'-the-Lantern.'

Tells how the drudging goblin sweat, 105
 To earn his cream-bowl duly set,
 When in one night, ere glimpse of morn,
 His shadowy flail hath threshed the corn
 That ten day-labourers could not end ;
 Then lies him down the lubber fiend, 110
 And, stretched out all the chimney's length,
 Basks at the fire his hairy strength ;
 And crop-full out of doors he flings,
 Ere the first cock his matin rings.
 Thus done the tales, to bed they creep, 115
 By whispering winds soon lulled asleep.
 Towered cities please us then,
 And the busy hum of men,

105-114. Drudging goblin = Robin Goodfellow or Hobgoblin, the *Knecht Ruprecht* of Germany, and the Brownie of Scottish superstition. He did the same offices of mischievous interference and occasional good service to the ploughman and farm-labourers as Mab did to the housemaids and dairy-maids. He is described as a huge loutish fellow, covered with shaggy hair, of immense strength, but very lazy, who could be roused by kind treatment, and especially by a bowl of cream or the like set out for him, to do an immense amount of work in the barn during the night.

105. Goblin, O. Fr. *gobelin*, from Low Lat. *gobelinus*, diminutive of Low Lat. *cobalus*, a mountain-sprite, borrowed from Gr. *kobalos*, a rogue. Cobalt is the same word, because the German miners supposed it to be a poisonous and harmful metal.

108. Flail, an instrument for threshing corn from the ear, consisting of the *hand-staff*, held in the hand; the *swiple*, which strikes the corn; and the *middle-band*, connecting the hand-staff and swiple, and which may be a thong of leather, or a rope of hemp or straw. O. Fr. *flael*, from Lat. *flagellum*, a diminutive of *flagrum*, a scourge.

110. Lubber fiend. Lubber is a clumsy-looking fellow, a dolt. A

Celtic word, as in Welsh *llob*, a dolt, *llabi*, a stripling. A fairy addresses Puck in Shakspeare's *Midsummer Night's Dream*, ii. 1, as 'thou lob of spirits.'—Fiend is the A.S. *feōnd*, *fīōnd*, literally 'hating,' the present participle of *feōn*, *feōgan*, to hate.

113. Crop - full = stomach - full. Crop, the craw or first stomach of a fowl, from its round, bunching form. A.S. *cropp*, a bunch, the top of a plant, craw of a bird. Hence the verb *crop* = to cut off the tops, and the noun *crop* = a harvest. To *crop out* is to bunch out. Cog. words are Ger. *kropf*, and Welsh *crofa*.

114. Matin = morning. The Canonical Hours or daily round of praise and prayer observed in the Christian Church from very early times, were as follows: Nocturns or Matins, before daybreak; Lauds, at daybreak; Prime, at six o'clock (the first hour); Tierce, at nine (third hour); Sexts, at noon (sixth hour); Nones, at three (ninth hour); Vespers, in the evening; and Compline or Completorium (completion), at bedtime.

117. Then marks here a transition of scene as well as a point of time. It is the *mood* that is transferred, not the youth in person. The rest of the poem, onward, describes the reveries, readings, and other recreations of the

Where throngs of knights and barons bold,
 In weeds of peace, high triumphs hold, 120
 With store of ladies, whose bright eyes
 Rain influence, and judge the prize
 Of wit or arms, while both contend
 To win her grace whom all commend.
 There let Hymen oft appear 125
 In saffron robe, with taper clear,
 And pomp, and feast, and revelry,
 With mask and antique pageantry ;
 Such sights as youthful poets dream
 On summer eves by haunted stream. 130

imaginary youth in his country cottage, after his morning walk and afternoon among the rustics.

120. **Weeds** = garments or clothes generally, now used only of a widow's mourning apparel. M.E. *wede*, from A.S. *wæde*, neuter, *wæd*, feminine, a garment. Cf. Shakspeare's *Troilus and Cressida*, iii. 3: 'To see great Hector in his weeds of peace.'—**Triumphs** = lordly entertainments. Through O. Fr. and Lat. *triumphus*, a public rejoicing for a victory, from Gr. *thriambos*, a hymn to Bacchus.

121. **Store of**, 'great store of' = 'plenty of,' 'many.' Cf. Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, V. iii. 2: 'Of lords and ladies infinite great store.'

122. **Rain influence**. The eyes of the ladies exercise the same influence over the success of the contending rivals as the planets over the fortunes of men. The words *influence*, *disastrous*, *ill-starred*, *ascendancy*, as well as phrases such as *born under a lucky star*, still testify to the once widespread belief in astrology. In Milton's youth, the belief in astrology as a real science was scarcely dead, and its power over the imagination must still have been strong. Fr., from Low Lat. *influentia*, made up of Lat. *in* and *fluo*, I flow, and originally signifying the virtue supposed to flow from planets upon men and things. Cf. Ben Jonson, in his *Elegy on Shakspeare*:

'Shine forth, thou star of poets, and
 with rage
 Or influence, chide or cheer the droop-
 ing stage.'

125. **Hymen**, the god of marriage, invoked in the bridal song.

126. **Saffron**, the recognised colour of Hymen's robe in the masques. His *mask* and *teade* (torch) are mentioned also in Spenser's *Epithalamion*.

127. **Revelry**, riotous or noisy festivity. O. Fr. *revel*, pride, disorder, *reveler*, to rebel; hence to riot, from Lat. *rebellare*, to rebel, *re-* and *bellum*, war.—**Pomp** = solemn procession, as in its classical meaning. Lat. *pompā*, from Gr. *pompē*.

128. **Mask** or masque = an 'acted pageant,' commonly produced in the 'progresses' of Queen Elizabeth, and which originated in the practice of introducing, in solemn or festive processions, men wearing masks, who represented allegorical personages. At first mere shows, the masques in Elizabeth's time—particularly those of Ben Jonson—took the form of irregular dramas, with dialogue, music, decorations, and interspersed with lyrics. They attained their most perfect form in the reign of James I., and declined during that of Charles I. The finest masque in English literature is Milton's *Comus*, presented in 1634.

130. **Haunted stream**, in allusion

Then to the well-trod stage anon,
 If Jonson's learnèd sock be on,
 Or sweetest Shakespeare, Fancy's child,
 Warble his native wood-notes wild,
 And ever, against eating cares, 135
 Lap me in soft Lydian airs,
 Married to immortal verse;
 Such as the meeting soul may pierce,
 In notes with many a winding bout
 Of linkèd sweetness long drawn out 140
 With wanton heed and giddy cunning;
 The melting voice through mazes running,

to the nymphs that frequented the rivers according to the ancient poets.

131. *Well-trod stage.* L'Allegro now turns to the reading of plays. It is the lighter drama, the drama of the 'sock' (comedy) rather than that of the 'buskin' (tragedy), that suits his mood. *Anon* = presently.

132. *Jonson's learned sock.* A graceful compliment to Ben Jonson, who may still have been living, as he did not die until 1637. He was the best scholar, in the strict sense of the word, among the Elizabethan dramatists. The sock (Lat. *soccus*) was a low-heeled shoe worn by the ancient actors of comedy; the buskin (Lat. *cothurnus*) was a high-heeled boot worn by tragic actors.

133. *Sweetest Shakspeare.* This use of the term 'sweet' as applied to Shakspeare, has been much criticised. Besides, the words 'warble his native wood-notes wild,' though perhaps suitable for the lyrics, are hardly satisfactory as spoken of comedies such as *As You Like It*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *Much Ado about Nothing*. But it should be remembered that 'sweetness' is a pervading quality of Shakspeare's style and prevailing temper, and that one of his most characteristic marks is the richness and exuberance of his 'fancy.' Besides, it is the artless beauty and irregular grace of the comedies that

now present themselves to the poet's mind, as contrasted with the more formal displays of 'Jonson's learned sock.'

135. *Eating cares*, a translation of Horace's 'mordaces sollicitudines.'

136. *Lydian airs.* The three ancient modes of music were the Dorian, the Phrygian, and the Lydian. The last was the most tender of the three, owing to its ascent by a semitone to the keynote, the form of cadence most agreeable to us moderns. The principal note of the Lydian is F, its scale being the scale of F with B natural substituted for B flat. Therein it differed from the Dorian, which was the key of D with F and C natural instead of sharp (Macfarren's *Lectures on Harmony*, pp. 13, 14).

137. *Married* = joined, set to. Cf. Milton's lines, *At a Solemn Music*, 1-3; and Tennyson's *Princess*, 172:

'Till at the last she set herself to man,
 Like perfect music unto noble words.'

138. Such words and music as may deeply affect those who hear them.

139. *Bout*, a bend or twist. Spelled also 'bought,' as in Spenser. Probably of Scandinavian origin, as in Danish *bugt*, a bend; cog. with A.S. *byht*, a bight or bay, from *búgan*, to bow, bend.

141. 'Wanton' and 'giddy' describe the appearance only; 'heed' and 'cunning,' the reality. There is a

Untwisting all the chains that tie
 The hidden soul of harmony ;
 That Orpheus' self may heave his head 145
 From golden slumber on a bed
 Of heaped Elysian flowers, and hear
 Such strains as would have won the ear
 Of Pluto to have quite set free
 His half-regained Eurydice. 150
 These delights if thou canst give,
 Mirth, with thee I mean to live.

curious felicity in the selection of these terms. The art and skill is to be disguised under a seeming carelessness of air. **Wanton** = irregular ; M.E. forms, *wantoun* and *wantowen*, formed from A.S. *wan*, lacking, and *togen*, pa.p. of *teōn*, to draw, to educate.—**Giddy** = thoughtless looking. M.E. *gidi* ; formed from A.S. *giddian*, to sing, be merry ; *gid*, *gidd*, and *gied*, a song.—**Cunning** = skill. From the same root as *can*, A.S. *cunnan*, to know. Cf. in this sense of the word, Psalm cxxxvii. 5 : 'If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning.'

142. **Melting**, getting softer and softer, and having a subduing effect on the hearer.—**Mazes**, in allusion, probably, to music somewhat difficult of execution.

144. **Harmony**. The accompanied voice is here meant, otherwise there would be 'melody,' but not 'harmony.' *Harmony* is the pleasing effect produced when two or more notes, which have certain relations to each other, are sounded together ; *melody* is the arrangement of one set of notes to form an air, not more than one note being sounded at a time. The poet therefore means by the 'hidden soul of harmony' that pleasing effect which is hidden, and metaphorically bound with chains until the notes are sounded together, those of the instrument accompanying those of the voice.

145. **Orpheus**, a celebrated poet and musician among the ancient Greeks. He played so exquisitely upon the lyre that the wild beasts and even rocks and trees used to follow him.—**Heave**, to raise or lift up ; hence *coalheaver*, *heavy*, and perhaps *heaven*.

146. **Golden** = excellent, as in the phrase the 'golden age.'

147. **Elysian**. Elysium, or Elysian fields, a beautiful place in the infernal regions where the souls of the virtuous abode after death, corresponding to modern ideas of Paradise.

149. **Pluto**, at first a surname of Hades, the god of the lower world, afterwards used as the real name of the god. He was a son of Cronos (Saturn), and brother of Zeus (Jupiter) and Poseidon (Neptune), and his wife was Persephōne or Proserpina, whom he carried off from the upper world. Here Milton asserts the superiority of the modern over the ancient music.

150. **Eurydice**, the wife of Orpheus. When she died he followed her into Hades, and by the charms of his lyre won her back from the inexorable Pluto, on condition that he would not look back at her upon the way into the upper world. This his tenderness for her made him forget, and she was caught back into the shades. Hence the expression 'half-regained.'

151. The poet speaks with less qualifying doubt in the corresponding passage of *Il Penseroso*, 175.

IL PENSEROSO.

HENCE, vain deluding Joys,
 The brood of Folly without father bred !
 How little you bested,
 Or fill the fixèd mind with all your toys !
 Dwell in some idle brain, 5
 And fancies fond with gaudy shapes possess,
 As thick and numberless
 As the gay motes that people the sunbeams,
 Or likest hovering dreams,
 The fickle pensioners of Morpheus' train. 10
 But hail ! thou Goddess, sage and holy !
 Hail, divinest Melancholy !

1. Cf. the commencement of *L'Allegro*.—**Vain** = useless.—**Deluding** = deceiving, pleasures being less in actual enjoyment than in anticipation.

2. In the preceding poem, the genealogy of Melancholy and Mirth was given. Now the pleasures of Mirth are said to be 'deluding,' and to be born of Folly as their mother, without a father.

3. **Bested** = to avail or be of advantage. The word is only used here in Milton. The usual meaning of the word is 'placed,' 'situated,' as a p.p., formed from A.S. *stede*, a place, which appears in *bedstead*, *homestead*.

4. **Fixed** = settled, resolute.

5. **Dwell** is imperative, hence = depart and dwell with.

6. **Fond** in its old sense of 'foolish.' For *fonned*, p.p. of M.E. *fonnen*, to act foolishly; *fon*, a fool, of Scandinavian origin, as in Icelandic *fáni*, a fool, a flag; hence, by a metaphor, a light, flighty person, a fool.—**Gaudy** = gay in colour. M.E. *gaude*, an ornament, from Lat. *gaudium*, joy.

8. **Gay** = lively, because they keep dancing up and down.—**Motes** = minute particles of dust. A.S. *mot*. The image is descriptive of the appearance of a ray of sunlight coming into a dark room. Cf. Chaucer's *Wife of Bath's Tale*, 868: 'As thick as motes in the sonne-beam.'

10. **Pensioners** = attendants, retinue; now specially 'persons paid an annual allowance,' as old soldiers and the like. Queen Elizabeth established a guard of handsome young gentlemen under the name of *Pensioners*. Hence the word became a common name for 'train,' 'retinue.' Cf. Shakspeare's *Midsummer Night's Dream*, ii. 1:

'I serve the fairy queen,
 To dew her orbs upon the green :
 The cowslips tall her *pensioners* be.

—**Morpheus**, the son of Somnus (Sleep), and the god of dreams. His name means the moulder or fashioner, because he shaped or formed the dreams of the sleeper.

Whose saintly visage is too bright
 To hit the sense of human sight,
 And therefore to our weaker view 15
 O'erlaid with black, staid Wisdom's hue ;
 Black, but such as in esteem
 Prince Memnon's sister might beseem,
 Or that starred Ethiop queen that strove
 To set her beauty's praise above 20
 The sea-nymphs, and their powers offended :
 Yet thou art higher far descended :
 Thee bright-haired Vesta long of yore
 To solitary Saturn bore ;
 His daughter she ; in Saturn's reign, 25
 Such mixture was not held a stain.

13. **Visage** is now hardly ever used except with some ideas of dislike.

14. **Hit** = to meet or touch. Cf. Shakspeare's *Antony and Cleopatra*, ii. 2: 'A strange invisible perfume hits the sense.' We use 'to strike' in the same sense.

16. **Staid Wisdom**. A 'stay' is a prop or support ; hence 'staid wisdom' is that which is supported by reason.

18. **Memnon** was the son of Tithonus and Eos (Aurora), and a prince of Æthiopia, who came to the aid of Priam in the Trojan war, and was slain by Achilles. Though black, he is described in the *Odyssey* as a youth of splendid beauty. His 'sister' is not mentioned by the older poets, but occurs in Dictys Cretensis with the name of Hemera. Her beauty may be presumed from that of her brother.

19-21. **That starred Ethiop queen**, Cassiopeia, 'starred,' because translated into the heavens and created into a constellation. She was the wife of Cepheus, king of Æthiopia, and the mother of Andromeda. She challenged the Nereids, 'nymphs of the sea,' for her daughter's superiority in beauty, and the former, offended at a mortal's being set above divinities, in revenge prevailed on Poseidon (Neptune) to send a sea-monster to

ravage Æthiopia. Andromeda was now exposed as a sacrifice to appease Poseidon, but she was saved and carried off by Perseus, who overcame and slew the monster.

23-30. The mythology here is Milton's own, and therefore symbolical. As he invented a genealogy for Mirth (*L'Allegro*, 14-24), so here, with even more subtlety of significance, he invents one for Melancholy.—**Vesta**, or Hestia, was daughter of Cronos (Saturn) and Rhēa. She was considered the goddess of the household fire and of domestic life.—**Saturn**, identical with the Greek Cronos, was the son of Uranus and Gē (Heaven and Earth), and the father of Zeus (Jupiter), Poseidon (Neptune), Hades (Pluto), Hera (Juno), and Hestia (Vesta). After Zeus (Jupiter or Jove) grew up, he dethroned his father, whence the term 'solitary' (line 24) applied to the latter. Perhaps, however, the term conveys an allusion to our word 'saturnine' = gloomy, so called because of the disposition of persons born under that planet's influence, according to the old astrologers. By this genealogy, then, Milton may mean that Melancholy is the offspring of Retirement and Culture, of solitary musings at one's own fireside. Per-

Oft in glimmering bowers and glades
 He met her, and in secret shades
 Of woody Ida's inmost grove,
 Whilst yet there was no fear of Jove. 30
 Come, pensive Nun, devout and pure,
 Sober, steadfast, and demure,
 All in a robe of darkest grain,
 Flowing with majestic train,
 And sable stole of cypress lawn 35
 Over thy decent shoulders drawn.
 Come ; but keep thy wonted state,
 With even step, and musing gait ;
 And looks commérceing with the skies,
 Thy rapt soul sitting in thine eyes : 40

haps, however, the epithet 'bright-haired,' applied to Vesta, and the imagination of her meetings with Saturn in the 'glimmering' shades of classic Ida, suggest a more mystic origin. Warton identifies her with Genius, and supposes the poet to imply that Melancholy is the child of Solitude and Genius.

29. *Ida*, a mountain-ridge near Troy, from the summit of which the gods watched the battles in the plains. It was the scene of the famous judgment of Paris as to beauty between the rival goddesses, Hēra (Juno), Aphrodīte (Venus), and Athēna (Minerva).

31. *Pensive* = thoughtful.

32. *Demure* = modest. The word now conveys a sense of affectation. O. Fr. *de murs*, that is, *de (bons) murs*, from Lat. *de*, of, and *mores*, manners.

33. *Grain* = colour. Through Fr., from Lat. *granum*, a seed. A name formerly applied, from their seed-like form, to one or more insects of the genus *Coccus*, which yield a scarlet dye, called also 'kermes,' whence *carmine* and *crimson*, now largely superseded by cochineal ; hence a red-coloured dye, a red colour of any kind pervading a texture, sometimes used by the poets as equivalent to Tyrian purple. Cf. 'grain of Sarra

(Tyre)'—*Paradise Lost*, xi. 242. From the permanence of the dye obtained from these insects, *grain* came to be applied to any fast colour, so that the phrase 'in grain' meant in any permanent colour so closely associated with the texture as to be irremovable ; hence to 'dye in grain,' which originally meant to dye with 'grain' or kermes, now means to dye in the fibre or raw material, as wool or silk, before it is manufactured. Hence the sense of 'engrained,' as 'engrained in vice.'

35. *Sable* = black, from the colour of the sable's fur.—*Stole*, here a 'veil' or 'hood,' not the long robe of the Roman matron.—*Cypress lawn*, a kind of crape. From its frizzled appearance, Fr. *crêpe*, formerly *crespe*, from Lat. *crispus*. Cf. Shakspeare's *Winter's Tale*, iv. 4 :

'Lawn as white as driven snow ;
Cyprus black as e'er was crow.'

36. *Decent* = comely.

37. *State* = dignified demeanour.

38. *Gait* = manner of walking. The same word as *gate*.

39. *Commérceing*. Accentuate on the second syllable.

40. *Rapt* = ravished, lifted into ecstasy.

There, held in holy passion still,
 Forget thyself to marble, till
 With a sad leaden downward cast
 Thou fix them on the earth as fast.
 And join with thee calm Peace and Quiet, 45
 Spare Fast, that oft with gods doth diet,
 And hears the Muses in a ring
 Aye round about Jove's altar sing;
 And add to these retirèd Leisure,
 That in trim gardens takes his pleasure; 50
 But, first and chiefest, with thee bring
 Him that yon soars on golden wing,
 Guiding the fiery-wheelèd throne,
 The Cherub Contemplation;
 And the mute Silence hist along, 55
 'Less Philomel will deign a song,
 In her sweetest saddest plight,
 Smoothing the rugged brow of Night,
 While Cynthia checks her dragon yoke,
 Gently o'er the accustomed oak. 60

42. Cf. the lines *On Shakspeare*,
13, 14:

'Then thou, our fancy of itself bereav-
 ing,
 Dost make us marble with too much
 conceiving.'

43. **Leaden** was the Saturnian colour, hence Melancholy's eyes are of the same hue as the dispiriting blasts from her father's star. Cf. Gray's *Ode to Adversity*: 'With leaden eye that loves the ground.'

44. As firmly fixed on the earth as before on heaven.

46-48. A favourite principle of Milton's is expressed here. No one can sit at the tables with the gods, or hear the muses sing around the throne of the deity, whose life is not pure from sensual taint.

50. **Trim** = made trim.

51-54. Milton here makes a daring use of the great vision of the Sapphire throne recorded in Ezekiel, x. Its wheels were four cherubs, each full of eyes all over, while in the midst

of them, and underneath the throne, was a burning fire. To one of the cherubs who guide the fiery wheelings of the visionary throne, the poet gives the name of Contemplation. The vision is described with more fulness in *Paradise Lost*, vi. 750-759.

52. **Yon** = yonder. A.S. *geond*.

55. **Hist**. This word is imperative, like 'bring' in line 51, and the meaning therefore is, 'Move through the mute silence hushingly or saying hush,' that is, telling the silence to continue unless the nightingale chooses to break it by one of her songs.

56. **Philomel** = the nightingale. Philomela was the daughter of Pandion, king of Attica, and the sister of Procne, who had married Tereus, king of Thrace. Being deceived and dishonoured by the latter, she was changed into a nightingale.

58. Cf. *Comus*, 251:

'At every fall smoothing the raven down
Of darkness till it smiled.'

59-60. **Cynthia**, a surname of

Sweet bird, that shunn'st the noise of folly,
 Most musical, most melancholy !
 Thee, chauntress, oft the woods among,
 I woo, to hear thy even-song ;
 And, missing thee, I walk unseen 65
 On the dry smooth-shaven green,
 To behold the wandering moon,
 Riding near her highest noon,
 Like one that had been led astray
 Through the heaven's wide pathless way, 70
 And oft, as if her head she bowed,
 Stooping through a fleecy cloud.
 Oft, on a plat of rising ground,
 I hear the far-off curfew sound,
 Over some wide-watered shore, 75
 Swinging slow with sullen roar ;
 Or, if the air will not permit,
 Some still removèd place will fit,

Diana, from Mount Cynthus, in Dēlos, her birthplace. She was goddess of the moon, as her brother Apollo was the god of the sun. Hence the meaning is : ' While the Moon, entranced with the song, is seen to check the pace of her dragon-drawn chariot over a particular oak-tree, that she may listen the longer.' It is a poetic liberty to give Diana a car drawn by dragons, as in the old mythology, Demēter or Ceres alone is drawn by them. Cf., however, Shakspeare's *Cymbeline*, ii. 2 : ' Fly swift, ye dragons of the night.'

62. Coleridge, in a well-known passage, protests against the song of the nightingale being called melancholy.

65. In contrast to the cheery love for society of L'Allegro (line 57).

67. Cf. Shakspeare's *Midsummer Night's Dream*, iv. 1 : ' Swifter than the wandering moon.' Cf. also the ' vaga luna ' of Horace, *Sat.* I. viii. 21.

68. Noon, ' when nearly full,' or perhaps ' at the highest point in the heaven to which she will rise,' noon being the time at which the sun reaches the highest point during the day.

69. Shelley asks of the moon :

' Art thou pale for weariness
 Of climbing heaven and gazing on the
 earth ?'

74. Curfew, in feudal times, the ringing of a bell at eight o'clock as a signal to put out all fires and lights. Literally ' cover-fire.' Fr. *couvre-feu*. The custom of ringing an evening bell has long been kept up in many districts of England.

75. ' Over some shore and the wide piece of water it edgcs.' The word ' some ' is a distinct intimation that the whole visual circumstances of the poem are ideal.

76. Note the fine effect of the alliteration here.—Sullen. Cf. Shakspeare's *Henry IV., Part II.*, i. 1 : ' sullen bell ;' *Tempest*, v. 1 : ' solemn curfew.'

77. Air = state of the weather.

78. Removed = remote, sequestered. Masson points out that, whereas in *L'Allegro*, the evening indoors did not begin till line 117, or near the end of the poem, here we are indoors at line 77, and three-fifths of the poem are yet to come.

Where glowing embers through the room
 Teach light to counterfeit a gloom, 80
 Far from all resort of mirth,
 Save the cricket on the hearth,
 Or the bellman's drowsy charm,
 To bless the doors from nightly harm.
 Or let my lamp, at midnight hour, 85
 Be seen in some high lonely tower,
 Where I may oft outwatch the Bear,
 With thrice-great Hermes, or unsphere
 The spirit of Plato, to unfold
 What worlds or what vast regions hold 90
 The immortal mind that hath forsook
 Her mansion in this fleshly nook ;
 And of those demons that are found
 In fire, air, flood, or underground,
 Whose power hath a true consent 95
 With planet or with element.

80. Counterfeit = to imitate.

83-84. The bellman or night watchman, as he went his rounds, called the hours and announced the state of the weather, as well as sung out pious phrases of blessing on those going to bed. — **Nightly** = during the night.

87. 'As the Bear never sets, this implies,' says Mr Keightley, 'that the student sits up till daybreak, when all the stars disappear.'

88. **Thrice-great Hermes**, the Egyptian king and philosopher Thoth, whom the Greeks called Hermes Trismegistus (thrice great), because they identified him with their god Hermes (Mercury), and attributed to him the possession of all knowledge and the invention of all arts. Books bearing his name are still extant, but the so-called Hermetic books are mostly fabrications of the Neo-Platonists, who wished to assert for their philosophical speculations a greater antiquity than Christianity could boast. — **Unsphere**. The literal meaning, as Masson points out, is confused with the metaphorical. Lite-

rally, the meaning is, 'Disentangle the doctrine of Plato by the profound study of his writings;' the metaphor is, 'Bring back the disembodied spirit of Plato from those invisible regions where it is now insphered.' We still speak of a dead person as 'removed to a higher sphere;' hence, reversely, to hold communion with such a person, would be to 'unsphere' him.

89-92. A reference to the *Phædo* and other dialogues of Plato, in which the question of Immortality is discussed. The **fleshly nook** is the body.

93-96. Some other of Plato's dialogues treated of 'dæmons.' But this assigning to them their abode in the four elements over which they had power, belongs rather to the later Platonists and to the writers of the middle ages. Of 'dæmons,' the chief kinds are *salamanders*, *syllphs*, *nymphs*, and *gnomes*. See Pope's *Rape of the Lock*, 59-66.

95. **Consent**, in its astrological sense, 'connection' or 'sympathy with.'

96. **Element**, a simple substance. It was formerly thought that fire, air,

Sometimes let gorgeous Tragedy
 In sceptred pall come sweeping by,
 Presenting Thebes, or Pelops' line,
 Or the tale of Troy divine, 100
 Or what (though rare) of later age
 Ennobled hath the buskined stage.
 But, O sad Virgin! that thy power
 Might raise Musæus from his bower;
 Or bid the soul of Orpheus sing 105
 Such notes as, warbled to the string,
 Drew iron tears down Pluto's cheek,
 And made Hell grant what love did seek;
 Or call up him that left half-told
 The story of Cambuscan bold, 110
 Of Camball, and of Algarsife,
 And who had Canace to wife,

earth, and water were elements; but it is now known that air consists of at least two elements, oxygen and nitrogen; and water of two, oxygen and hydrogen.

97. *L'Allegro* delights himself with the comedies of Jonson and Shakspeare; but *Il Penseroso* loves tragedy, and only the nobler and more solemn plays, such as those of the great Greek tragedians, Æschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides. The misfortunes of kings and heroes were considered by the Greeks the true province of tragedy, hence the terms 'gorgeous' and 'sceptred.'

98. *Pall*, from Lat. *palla*, the outer garment.

99. *Presenting* = representing.—*Thebes*, the capital of Bœotia. Æschylus made it the scene of his *Seven against Thebes*, Sophocles of his *Œdipus Tyrannus* and *Antigone*, and Euripides of his *Bacchæ*.—*Pelops' line*, an allusion to the trilogy of Æschylus on the subject of the murder of Agamemnon, a descendant of Pelops, who gave his name to Peloponnesus. The trilogy was called the *Oresteia*, and the three plays of which it was composed were the *Agamemnon*, the *Choëphoræ*, and *Eumenides*.

memnon, the *Choëphoræ*, and *Eumenides*.

100. The reference is, of course, not to the Homeric poems, but to the particular episodes of the history of Troy, treated by Sophocles in his *Ajax* and his *Philoctetes*, and by Euripides in his *Hecuba* and his *Andromache*.

101, 102. This can hardly mean any other than Shakspeare. His *Othello*, *King Lear*, and *Hamlet* place him on a level with the greatest of the Greek tragedians.—*Buskined stage* = tragedy. See note to *L'Allegro*, 132.

103. Melancholy is addressed.

104. *Musæus*, a mythical Greek poet, said to have been son of Orpheus. A yearning after the past is beautifully expressed in these lines.

105–108. See *L'Allegro*, 145–150, and the notes thereon. Milton loves to recall the legend of Orpheus, one of the tenderest fancies ever conceived by poet's brain.

109–115. The allusion is to Chaucer, whose *Squieres Tale* is a mere fragment. It promised to be a romance of rare interest and beauty. The *Cambuscan* (in Chaucer, *Cámbynskan*) of the story was a Tartar king, who had two sons, *Algarsyfe* and

That owned the virtuous ring and glass,
 And of the wondrous horse of brass
 On which the Tartar king did ride ; 115
 And if aught else great bards beside
 In sage and solemn tunes have sung,
 Of turneys, and of trophies hung,
 Of forests, and enchantments drear,
 Where more is meant than meets the ear. 120
 Thus, Night, oft see me in thy pale career,
 Till civil-suited Morn appear,
 Not tricked and frownced, as she was wont
 With the Attic boy to hunt,
 But kerchieft in a comely cloud, 125
 While rocking winds are piping loud,
 Or ushered with a shower still,
 When the gust hath blown his fill,
 Ending on the rustling leaves,
 With minute drops from off the eaves. 130

Cambalo, and a daughter, Canace. Spenser continues and finishes the tale in his *Faerie Queene*, IV. ii. and iii. ; and John Lane, a friend of Milton's father, also wrote a continuation of the story. It is Triamond who 'had Canace to wife' in Spenser (*Faerie Queene*, IV. iii. 52).

112. Who = him who.

113. Virtuous = possessing magical virtue. The ring and glass or mirror were presents which the knight brought to Canace from the king of Arabia and India. If she wore the ring on her thumb or carried it in her purse, she could understand and converse with every kind of bird, and know every herb and its properties. The glass or mirror showed the falseness of subjects or of lovers. The horse could carry any one, by simply turning a pin, any distance in one day.

116-120. Great bards, such as Spenser, Ariosto, and Tasso. Perhaps the reference is more particularly to Spenser, in whose great poem, the *Faerie Queene*, all the enumerated circumstances may be found. The words 'sage and solemn' are peculiarly

applicable to the bard of Christian chivalry, and line 120 conveys an allusion to the allegorical meaning underneath his story. In his *Areopagitica*, Milton speaks of him as 'our sage and serious Spenser.'

122. Civil-suited, in citizen dress.

123. Tricked = adorned. — Frownced, extravagantly curled.

124. Attic boy, Cephālus, grandson of Cecrops, king of Attica, and to whom Eos (Aurōra), the goddess of the dawn, made love.

125. Kerchieft = covered as to the head. M. E. *couverchef*, from O. Fr. *couvrechef*; *covrir*, to cover, *chef*, the head.

126. Rocking in active sense, 'making to rock,' — Piping = whistling.

127. Ushered = introduced.

128. His, the old possessive of *it* as well as *he*. The form *its* is not older than the end of the 16th century. *Its* does not occur in the English Bible of 1611, or in Spenser, rarely in Shakespeare, and is not common until the time of Dryden. *Its* is found only thrice in Milton (*Hymn on the Nativity*, 106 ; *Paradise Lost*, i. 254, and iv. 813).

130. Minute, not 'very small,' but

And, when the sun begins to fling
 His flaring beams, me, Goddess, bring
 To archèd walks of twilight groves,
 And shadows brown, that Sylvan loves,
 Of pine, or monumental oak, 135
 Where the rude axe with heavèd stroke,
 Was never heard the nymphs to daunt,
 Or fright them from their hallowed haunt.
 There, in close covert, by some brook,
 Where no profaner eye may look, 140
 Hide me from day's garish eye,
 While the bee with honeyed thigh,
 That at her flowery work doth sing,
 And the waters murmuring,
 With such consort as they keep, 145
 Entice the dewy-feathered Sleep.
 And let some strange mysterious dream
 Wave at his wings, in airy stream
 Of lively portraiture displayed,
 Softly on my eyelids laid ; 150

'falling every minute, as in *minute-gun*.

133. **Twilight groves**, where it is neither light nor dark, shady.

134. **Sylvan** = Silvanus, a woodland god of the old Latins.

135. **Monumental** = memorial, telling of old times.

136. **Heaved** = uplifted.

137. **Daunt** = to terrify.

140. **Profaner** = somewhat profane. A Latinism. The word 'profane' originally meant merely 'unconsecrated.' Thus, 'profane history' still means merely *secular* instead of *sacred* history.

141. **Garish** = bright, glaring. From the old verb *gare*, a variant of *gaze*. M.E. *gasen*, from the Scandinavian.

142. Milton's natural history is incorrect here. The honey is carried not on the thigh of the bee, but in a sort of stomach or pouch. It is the pollen that is carried on the thigh.

145. **Consort** = companionship.

146. For 'dewy,' cf. Shakspeare's

'golden dew of sleep' (*Richard III.*, iv. 1), and for 'feathered,' cf. Virgil's 'volucris somnus' (*Æneid*, ii. 794; vi. 702).

147-150. Masson thus paraphrases this obscure passage: 'Let some strange mysterious dream wave (that is, move to and fro) at his (that is, Sleep's) wings, in an airy stream of lively images displayed before my inward vision.' Sleep comes attended by a Dream. This Dream he bears on his wings, and as he stands over the reposing poet, the Dream is to hover to and fro before him, and present various images to the eyes of the sleeper. Others suggest that the whole four lines should be taken as referring to the Dream only, that is, to take 'his wings' = the Dream's wings, and 'displayed' as qualifying *wings*, but *at* makes an apparently insuperable obstacle to this reading. Warton proposes to strike out *at*. It is hardly possible that 'wave at' could be used for 'wave at me' = wave near,

And, as I wake, sweet music breathe
 Above, about, or underneath,
 Sent by some Spirit to mortals good,
 Or the unseen Genius of the wood.
 But let my due feet never fail 155
 To walk the studious cloister's pale,
 And love the high-embowèd roof,
 With antique pillars massy-proof,
 And storied windows richly dight,
 Casting a dim religious light. 160
 There let the pealing organ blow,
 To the full-voiced quire below,
 In service high, and anthems clear,
 As may with sweetness, through mine ear,
 Dissolve me into ecstasies, 165
 And bring all Heaven before mine eyes.
 And may at last my weary age
 Find out the peaceful hermitage,
 The hairy gown and mossy cell,
 Where I may sit and rightly spell 170
 Of every star that heaven doth shew,
 And every herb that sips the dew,
 Till old experience do attain
 To something like prophetic strain.
 These pleasures, Melancholy, give ; 175
 And I with thee will choose to live.

151. **Breathe**, in imperative mood.

155. **Due** = accustomed.

156. **Cloister**, a covered walk, open at one side, and attached to a religious building. — **Pale** = inclosure.

157. **Embowed** = loftily vaulted or arched. Cf. *Comus*, 1015: 'The bowed welkin.'

* 158. **Massy-proof** = proof against the weight they have to bear.

159. **Storied** = painted with stories, or histories taken from Scripture. — **Dight** = adorned.

164. **As may** = such as may.

168. **The**. The article is here used generically, as in our phrase, 'he went

up to the university.' — **Hermitage** = the cell or habitation of a hermit. M.E. *eremite*, through Fr. and Lat., from Gr. *erēmitēs*, from *erēmos*, desert, solitary.

169. **Hairy gown**, in allusion to the coarse dress of the hermit.

170. **Spell** = read, construe, get at the sense of. M.E. *spellen*, to spell; A.S. *spellian*, to tell, *spell*, a story.

173. **Do**, subjunctive, so in lines 44 and 122 of this poem.

173, 174. With years would come the power of rising in lofty contemplation into the region of inspiration and of prophecy.

LYCIDAS.

[In this Monody the author bewails a learned friend, unfortunately drowned in his passage from Chester on the Irish Seas, 1637; and by occasion, foretells the ruin of our corrupted clergy, then in their height.]

YET once more, O ye laurels, and once more,
 Ye myrtles brown, with ivy never sere,
 I come to pluck your berries harsh and crude,
 And with forced fingers rude
 Shatter your leaves before the mellowing year. 5
 Bitter constraint and sad occasion dear
 Compels me to disturb your season due ;
 For Lycidas is dead, dead ere his prime,
 Young Lycidas, and hath not left his peer.
 Who would not sing for Lycidas ? he knew 10
 Himself to sing, and build the lofty rhyme.
 He must not float upon his watery bier
 Unwept, and welter to the parching wind,
 Without the meed of some melodious tear.

1. Yet once more. The last piece Milton had produced was *Comus*, which was 'presented' at Ludlow Castle in 1634. — Laurels. Cf. Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, I. i. 9 :

'The Laurell, meed of mightie Conquerours
 And Poets sage.'

2. Myrtles. At a Greek banquet a myrtle bough was held by each guest as he sung in his turn. — Ivy. Cf. Horace's 'ivy the reward of learned brows.' — Sere, withered.

3. Crude, unripe, literally 'raw.'

3-14. The sad occasion compels him to sing before time could have mellowed his strains. Hence, in the language of his simile, the berries are unripe, the fingers with which he plucks them are 'rude,' and the leaves are shattered by being hastily fingered

before the due season—'the mellowing year.'

6. Dear, 'coming near the heart,' 'grievous.' Cf. 'my dearest foe,' Shakspeare, *Hamlet*, I. ii. 182.

7. Compels. The verb is singular, considered as agreeing grammatically with the nominative nearest to it.

10. Cf. Virgil's 'who could deny a song to Gallus?' — The name *Lycidas* occurs in Theocritus, and as the name of one of the speakers in Virgil's ninth *Eclogue*.

13. Welter, roll to and fro. Note that this is an unrhymed line. The unrhymed lines in the poem are 1, 13, 15, 22, 39, 51, 82, 91, 92, and 161. — To = 'under,' or 'by means of.' So in the phrase 'made to order.'

14. Similarly Spenser's lines on the death of Sir Philip Sidney are called *Tearcs of the Muses*. The sound of

Begin, then, sisters of the sacred well 15
 That from beneath the seat of Jove doth spring ;
 Begin, and somewhat loudly sweep the string.
 Hence with denial vain and coy excuse :
 So may some gentle Muse
 With lucky words favour *my* destined urn, 20
 And as he passes turn,
 And bid fair peace be to my sable shroud !
 For we were nursed upon the self-same hill,
 Fed the same flock, by fountain, shade, and rill ;
 Together both, ere the high lawns appeared 25
 Under the opening eyelids of the Morn,
 We drove a-field, and both together heard
 What time the grey-fly winds her sultry horn,
 Battening our flocks with the fresh dews of night,
 Oft till the star that rose, at evening bright 30
 Towards heaven's descent had sloped his westerling wheel.
 Meanwhile the rural ditties were not mute ;
 Tempered to the oaten flute
 Rough Satyrs danced, and Fauns with cloven heel
 From the glad sound would not be absent long ; 35
 And old Damœtas loved to hear our song.
 But, oh ! the heavy change, now thou art gone,
 Now thou art gone and never must return !
 Thee, Shepherd, thee the woods and desert caves,
 With wild thyme and the gadding vine o'ergrown, 40

the word with which the opening paragraph ends is the prevailing rhyme. It possesses 6 lines out of the first 14.

15. He addresses the Muses. Their favourite abode was Mount Helicon, with its two fountains Aganippe and Hippocrene. Most editors have supposed Milton to refer to the 'Pierian spring' at the foot of Mount Olympus, but Hales quotes the opening lines of Hesiod's *Theogony*, to show that Aganippe is the 'sacred well' in question, as it is there styled the 'altar of the mighty son of Kronos'—the 'seat of Jove' of our text.

19. Muse = 'poet,' because referred to as 'he' in line 21.

20. Lucky words, words of good omen.—Destined to hold my ashes.

23-36. These lines, under the veil of pastoral language, express that Milton and his friend had been members of the same college, that they had had the same pursuits, had taken walks together, and performed the academical iambics and elegiacs together.

28. Grey-fly, the trumpet-fly or gad-fly, which hums sharply at noon.

29. Battening, feeding.

33. Tempered, attuned.

34. The Satyrs and Fauns probably refer to the miscellaneous undergraduates of his time.

36. Damœtas, one of Virgil's shepherds, probably referring here to W. Chapell, the Tutor of Christ's College in Milton and King's time.

40. Gadding, straying about.

And all their echoes mourn.

The willows, and the hazel copses green,

Shall now no more be seen

Fanning their joyous leaves to thy soft lays.

As killing as the canker to the rose,

45

Or taint-worm to the weanling herds that graze,

Or frost to flowers, that their gay wardrobe wear,

When first the white-thorn blows ;

Such, Lycidas, thy loss to shepherd's ear.

Where were ye, Nymphs, when the remorseless deep 50

Closed o'er the head of your loved Lycidas ?

For neither were ye playing on the steep

Where your old bards, the famous Druids, lie,

Nor on the shaggy top of Mona high,

Nor yet where Deva spreads her wizard stream :

55

Ay me ! I fondly dream

'Had ye been there,' . . . for what could that have done ?

What could the Muse herself that Orpheus bore,

The Muse herself, for her enchanting son,

60

Whom universal nature did lament,

When, by the rout that made the hideous roar,

His gory visage down the stream was sent,

Down the swift Hebrus to the Lesbian shore ?

Alas ! what boots it with incessant care

To tend the homely, slighted, shepherd's trade,

65

And strictly meditate the thankless Muse ?

Were it not better done, as others use,

45. Canker = canker-worm.

46. Taint-worm, a small, red spider supposed to be injurious to cattle.—
Weanling, newly weaned.

49. Such = so killing.

52-55. The steep is probably Penmaenmawr, overhanging the sea opposite Anglesea ; Warton, however, thinks that the passage is a reminiscence of Camden's mention of the Druid sepulchres at Kerig y Druidion, in the mountains of Denbighshire.—Mona is certainly Anglesea here, not the Isle of Man ; the term shaggy refers to the groves and trees with which the island formerly abounded.—Deva is the Dee, the ancient boundary between England and Wales, and the centre

of much legend and tradition. Cf. Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, IV. xi. 39 :

'Dee, which Britons long ygone
Did call divine, that doth by Chester
tend.'

58-63. Calliope, the muse of epic poetry, mother of Orpheus (see note to *L'Allegro*, 145). Orpheus was torn to pieces by the women of Thrace, whom he had treated with contempt. His head was thrown upon the river Hebrus, down which it rolled to the sea, and was borne to the island of Lesbos.

66. Meditate, practise.

67-69. 'Were it not better to do

To sport with Amaryllis in the shade,
 Or with the tangles of Neæra's hair?
 Fame is the spur that the clear spirit doth raise 70
 (That last infirmity of noble mind)
 To scorn delights and live laborious days;
 But the fair guerdon when we hope to find,
 And think to burst out into sudden blaze,
 Comes the blind Fury with the abhorred shears, 75
 And slits the thin-spun life. 'But not the praise,'
Phœbus replied, and touched my trembling ears:
 'Fame is no plant that grows on mortal soil,
 Nor in the glistening foil
 Set off to the world, nor in broad rumour lies, 80
 But lives and spreads aloft by those pure eyes
 And perfect witness of all-judging Jove;
 As he pronounces lastly on each deed,
 Of so much fame in heaven expect thy meed.'
 O fountain Arethuse, and thou honoured flood, 85
 Smooth-sliding Mincius, crowned with vocal reeds,
 That strain I heard was of a higher mood.
 But now my oat proceeds,
 And listens to the Herald of the Sea
 That came in Neptune's plea. 90
 He asked the waves, and asked the felon winds,
 What hard mishap hath doomed this gentle swain?
 And questioned every gust of rugged wings
 That blows from off each beakèd promontory.
 They knew not of his story; 95
 And sage Hippotades their answer brings,

like others, and lead a life of luxurious leisure, amusement, and frivolous love-making?'—Amaryllis and Neæra are the names of imaginary shepherdesses in the Greek and Latin pastorals.

71. A close parallel to this famous line occurs in Tacitus (*Hist.* iv. 6).

73. Guerdon, reward.

75. Fury, At'ropos, one of the *Fates*, who cut the thread of human life.

77. Phœbus, Apol'lo, the god of poetry. There is an allusion here to the common notion that, when any one is spoken of, his ears tingle.

79. Foil, any sheet of shining metallic

leaf used to 'set off' or display costly and precious articles.

85. Arethu'se, a celebrated fountain near Syracuse, of which place the poet Theocritus was a native.

86. Min'cius, the river Mincio, a tributary of the Po, near which the poet Virgil was born.

89. Herald, Tri'ton, deputed by Neptune, the god of the sea, to make a judicial inquiry into the matter.

91. Felon, wicked, cruel.

96. Hippot'ades, Æ'olus, son of Hippotes, ruler of the winds, which were kept in a cave or 'dungeon.'

That not a blast was from his dungeon strayed ;
 The air was calm, and on the level brine
 Sleek Panope with all her sisters played.
 It was that fatal and perfidious bark,
 Built in the eclipse, and rigged with curses dark,
 That sunk so low that sacred head of thine.

100

Next, Camus, reverend sire, went footing slow,
 His mantle hairy and his bonnet sedge,
 Inwrought with figures dim, and on the edge
 Like to that sanguine flower inscribed with woe.
 'Ah ! who hath reft,' quoth he, ' my dearest pledge ?'
 Last came, and last did go,
 The pilot of the Galilean lake ;

105

Two massy keys he bore of metals twain
 (The golden opes, the iron shuts amain).

110

He shook his mitred locks, and stern bespake :—

' How well could I have spared for thee, young swain,
 Enow of such as, for their bellies' sake,
 Creep, and intrude, and climb into the fold !

115

Of other care they little reckoning make
 Than how to scramble at the shearers' feast,
 And shove away the worthy bidden guest.

Blind mouths ! that scarce themselves know how to hold

A sheep-hook, or have learned aught else the least

120

That to the faithful herdman's art belongs !

What recks it them ? What need they ? They are sped ;

And, when they list, their lean and flashy songs

Grate on their scannel pipes of wretched straw ;

99. Pan'ope, one of the Nereids, daughters of the sea-god Nereus, who attended Neptune riding on sea-horses.

103. Ca'mus, the god of the sluggish river Cam, at Cambridge.

106. The hyacinth, which sprung from the blood of Hyacinthus, who was killed by the stroke of Apollo's quoit. Its petals bear the Greek words, *ai, ai*, exclamations of woe.

107. Pledge, child, pledge of love.

109. St Peter, who had a boat on the sea of Galilee, and who 'keeps the keys of heaven.'

111. Amain, with force.

113-131. In this memorable passage,

Milton, for the first time, speaks out his sympathy with the party with which he was afterwards so intimately connected. Its vehemence and vigour show the strength of these feelings about the state of the Church under Laud, which afterwards found freer expression in his prose pamphlets. His contempt and indignation show themselves in such phrases as '*for their bellies' sake*,' '*blind mouths*,' '*their lean and flashy songs*.'

122. They are sped, they are provided for.

124. Scannel, producing a weak screeching sound.

The hungry sheep look up, and are not fed, 125
 But, swollen with wind and the rank mist they draw,
 Rot inwardly, and foul contagion spread ;
 Besides what the grim wolf with privy paw
 Daily devours apace, and nothing said.
 But that two-handed engine at the door 130
 Stands ready to smite once, and smite no more.'

Return, Alpheus ; the dread voice is past,
 That shrunk thy streams ; return, Sicilian Muse,
 And call the vales, and bid them hither cast
 Their bells and flowerets of a thousand hues. 135
 Ye valleys low, where the mild whispers use
 Of shades, and wanton winds, and gushing brooks,
 On whose fresh lap the swart star sparely looks,
 Throw hither all your quaint enamelled eyes,
 That on the green turf suck the honeyed showers, 140
 And purple all the ground with vernal flowers.
 Bring the rathe primrose that forsaken dies,
 The tufted crow-toe, and pale jessamine,

126. In reference to the unsound and unwholesome doctrines they teach.

128-129. Perhaps an allusion to the Romanising influence of Laud's party.

130-131. The general sense is, that a time of retribution is at hand. The **two-handed engine** means the two-edged sword of the Apocalypse, according to Professor Masson. See Rev. ii. 12, 'he which hath the sharp sword with two edges;' and iii. 20, 'I stand at the door and knock;' the speaker being the same figure from whose mouth came the two-edged sword, with which the church of Pergamos had been threatened. Though there is a difference between the conceptions of 'a sharp two-edged sword' issuing from the mouth of a figure standing at a door, and a 'two-handed engine' at a door, and standing ready to smite; yet it is quite probable that the two images may have become fused together in Milton's mind, and that his use of the second is a poetic variation of the first. Some explain the 'two-handed engine' as the meta-

phorical axe in the gospel, which was to be laid to the foot of the tree; and, with still less likelihood, others have read into the passage a prophecy of Laud's execution eight years later.

132. Alpheus, a stream supposed to be connected with the fountain Arethuse before mentioned. Trench notes the exquisite art with which Milton manages the transition from the Christian to the heathen. He assumes that the Alpheus and the Sicilian Muse had shrunk away ashamed while St Peter was speaking. In bidding them now to return, he implies that he is coming down from the spiritual heights, to which for a while he had been lifted up, and entering the region of pastoral poetry once more.

136. Use, frequent.

138. Swart star, that is, 'swart-making' or 'tanning' from the effect of its heat. It is the Dog-star which rose at Athens about the time of the greatest heat, and hence was thought to cause it. Cf. our *dog-days*.—
Sparely, rarely or lightly.

142. Rathe, early.

The white pink, and the pansy freaked with jet,
 The glowing violet, 145
 The musk-rose, and the well-attired woodbine,
 With cowslips wan that hang the pensive head,
 And every flower that sad embroidery wears ;
 Bid amaranthus all his beauty shed,
 And daffodillies fill their cups with tears, 150
 To strew the laureate hearse where Lycid lies.
 For so, to interpose a little ease,
 Let our frail thoughts dally with false surmise.
 Ay me ! Whilst thee the shores and sounding seas
 Wash far away, where'er thy bones are hurled ; 155
 Whether beyond the stormy Hebrides,
 Where thou perhaps under the whelming tide
 Visit'st the bottom of the monstrous world ;
 Or whether thou, to our moist vows denied,
 Sleep'st by the fable of Bellerus old, 160
 Where the great Vision of the guarded mount
 Looks toward Namancos and Bayona's hold.
 Look homeward, Angel, now, and melt with ruth :
 And, O ye dolphins, waft the hapless youth.
 Weep no more, woeful shepherds, weep no more, 165
 For Lycidas, your sorrow, is not dead,

144. Freaked, spotted.

146. Well-attired, having a handsome attire or head-dress, its flower.

151. Hearse, a funeral monument.

154. Ay me ! a Greek interjection.

158. Monstrous world, the world of monsters.

160-164. The place called 'the fable of Belle'rus old' is St Michael's Mount in Cornwall. It was anciently called Belle'rium, from which Milton has formed the name Bellerus, as that of one of the ancient giants of Britain. He represents the Archangel Michael appearing as a 'vision' on this mount, called 'guarded,' because it was formerly fortified. An excellent suggestion is offered by Professor Jebb, in his recent monograph on Bentley (p. 214), that this passage is another reminiscence of Camden, who remarks, in speaking of the Cornish coast, adjacent to St Michael's Mount, 'there is no other

place in this island that looks toward Spain.' This fact was present to Milton's mind, and he wished to work it in ; then he consulted Mercator's Atlas, where he found the town of Namancos marked near Cape Finis-terre, and the castle of Bayona also prominent ; these gave him his ornate periphrasis for 'Spain.' The sense of lines 161-164 seems to be, as given by Todd, 'O Angel (seated on the guarded mount), look no longer *seaward* to Namancos and Bayona's hold : rather turn your eyes to another object. Look *homeward* or *landward*, look towards your *own coast now*, and view with pity the corpse of the shipwrecked Lycidas floating thither.'

163. Ruth, pity, grief for the distress of another. From root of *rue*.

166. Your sorrow, the object of your sorrow.

Sunk though he be beneath the watery floor.
 So sinks the day-star in the ocean bed,
 And yet anon repairs his drooping head,
 And tricks his beams, and with new-spangled ore 170
 Flames in the forehead of the morning sky :
 So Lycidas sunk low, but mounted high,
 Through the dear might of Him that walked the waves,
 Where, other groves and other streams along,
 With nectar pure his oozy locks he laves, 175
 And hears the unexpressive nuptial song,
 In the blest kingdoms meek of joy and love.
 There entertain him all the Saints above,
 In solemn troops, and sweet societies,
 That sing, and singing in their glory move, 180
 And wipe the tears for ever from his eyes.
 Now, Lycidas, the shepherds weep no more ;
 Henceforth thou art the genius of the shore,
 In thy large recompense, and shalt be good
 To all that wander in that perilous flood. 185
 Thus sang the uncouth swain to the oaks and rills,
 While the still morn went out with sandals grey :
 He touched the tender stops of various quills,
 With eager thought warbling his Doric lay :
 And now the sun had stretched out all the hills, 190
 And now was dropped into the western bay.
 At last he rose, and twitched his mantle blue :
 To-morrow to fresh woods, and pastures new.

169. Repairs, renews.

170. Tricks, dresses out.—Ore = metal.

173. There is peculiar fitness to the subject of the poem in this reference to Christ's power over the waves.

176. Unexpressive, not to be expressed, inexpressible.

181. See Isa. xxv. 8 ; Rev. vii. 17.

183-185. Milton turns again to the classic manner, and Lycidas is converted into a *numen*.

186. Uncouth, unskilled, rude.

188. Stops of quills, holes in the reeds of the shepherd's pipe.

189. Doric, pastoral, because Theocritus and other pastoral poets wrote in the Doric dialect.

192. Blue was the colour of a shepherd's dress, and the poet here personates a poetic shepherd.

193. In this ending, Milton announces that he is passing on to other occupations.

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